Vol. 4, No. 2. October, 1939

Mrs A. G. Tyler

University of Alberta Library
0 1620 2789902 8

Canadian POETRY MAGAZINE

PS
8273
C512
v.4:no.2
1939

Augustana

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA
HALIFAX, N. S.

$2.00 a Year 50c a Number

EX LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTENSIS

HUMANISM

BY

DOUGLAS BUSH

The author is a professor of English at Harvard University, and an eminent authority.

This little book is a publication of the Alexander Lectures delivered at the University of Toronto this year.

1.50

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
TORONTO, CANADA

We Want a Thousand New Subscribers

SPECIAL OFFER

One free subscription will be given for every five new subscriptions secured by any individual. This is an opportunity for friends of Canadian Poetry to receive a free subscription by securing five new subscribers at $2.00 per year. Help the magazine and get this bonus.

CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 491, Station F
TORONTO

Canadian POETRY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 4
No. 2—OCTOBER, 1939

Published under the auspices of the
CANADIAN AUTHORS' ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 104, STATION F, TORONTO

The Canadian Poetry Magazine

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE issued under the auspices of the Canadian Authors' Association for the encouragement and development of Canadian verse.

Annual Subscription, two dollars; single copy, fifty cents.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed, if return of manuscript is desired.

Individual criticism of submitted verse cannot be undertaken by the magazine.

Address all correspondence to Canadian Poetry Magazine, Post Office Box, No. 104, Station F, Toronto, Ontario.

* * *

Notice of Awards

The Business Management has decided to revert to the *Magazine*'s original policy of awarding prizes, namely: First prize, fifteen dollars; Second, ten dollars; Third, five dollars. Writers of poems awarded Honourable Mention will receive one year's free subscription to the *Canadian Poetry Magazine.*

PRIZES

FOR THE JULY NUMBER

First—*Words Are Never Enough,* Charles Bruce, Toronto.
Second—*The Little Donkey,* Herbert G. Uren, London, Ont.
Third—*Fledgling,* Gloria Lauriston, Chatham, Ont.

HONOURABLE MENTION

Portrait—Diana Skala, Toronto.
Nicholas Gatineau—Arthur S. Bourinot, Ottawa.
Marriage—Patrick James, Toronto.

AUGUSTANA LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CONTENTS

		Page
Famous Poems of the First Great War	*Nathaniel A. Benson*	5
Sister Marah	*F. Robina Monkman*	13
Ideal Decline	*Norman Hainsworth*	18
The Last Hour	*Mary Elizabeth Colman*	19
Two Poems	*Estelle Fox*	20
A Canadian to America	*Nathaniel A. Benson*	22
Two Poems	*E. Hope Kerr*	24
Orchard Fantasia	*Ethel Kirk Grayson*	26
Betrayal	*Fred E. Laight*	28
Grain Elevators	*Elizabeth Garbutt*	29
Two Poems	*Clara Bernhardt*	30
Prayer	*L. H. C.*	31
Autumn, the Dissembler	*Lillian Collier Gray*	32
A Sequence	*Paul Halley*	33
Two Poems	*Sidney Fuller*	35
Sonnet	*Anna M. Henderson*	36
Autumn Walk	*Ruth Johnston*	37
As Onwards Sweeps the Tide	*Christine L. Henderson*	38
In Our Town	*Floris Clark McLaren*	39
Two Poems	*Lilian Leveridge*	39
Street	*Alan Brown*	41
Napoli	*Amabel King*	41
Sometime	*Stanley Beirnes*	42
Monologue at 2 a.m.	*Kathryn Munro*	42
September Third	*Anson Bailey Cutts*	43
Symbols	*Sheila Barbour*	43
Detour	*Paul Potts*	44
Little Things	*Ann Wilson*	44
Canadian Poetry Reviews		45

THE Canadian Authors' Association established the Canadian Poetry Magazine to stimulate the production of fine verse in Canada. The twelve issues of Volumes 1, 2, and 3 were largely made possible through the generosity of Foundation Supporters, whose gifts supplemented the Magazine's earnings from subscriptions and advertisements.

We have proved the existence of high-grade ore, but we need your continued support to produce it. If you believe that in the highest sense we cannot nationally exist without a great poetry, you will strengthen us by your financial support. You are invited to assist by contributing to a fund for the production of Volume 4.

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS FOR VOLUME 4

Wm. Dalton, Vancouver; W. A. Deacon, Toronto; Lewis Duncan, Toronto; Mrs. Hubbard Ellis, London, England; Miss Ellen M. Fulton, Little Harbour, N.S.; Mr. J. M. Gibbon, Montreal; Mrs. Douglas C. Henderson, Toronto; Mr. J. F. B. Livesay, Toronto; F. R. MacKelcan, Toronto; Dr. J. Markowitz, Toronto; Mr. P. D. Ross, Ottawa; Mr. H. S. Southam, Ottawa; Mr. W. M. Southam, Ottawa.

Others who have indicated their interest by making donations are: Sir Frederick Banting, Toronto; Dr. Beaumont S. Cornell, Fort Wayne, Indiana, U.S.A.; Miss Mary S. Edgar, Toronto; Mrs. J. J. Gibbons, Toronto; R. L. Hale, Peterborough, Ont.; F. R. Livesay, Toronto; Ivan R. Mackintosh, La Salette, Ont.; Mr. Jas. A. Stitt, Ottawa.

J. MARKOWITZ,
Business Executive

The Canadian Poetry MAGAZINE

VOL. 4, NO. 2 OCTOBER, 1939

EDITOR: E. J. Pratt. ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AWARDS: E. K. Brown, F. O. Call, William Arthur Deacon, Pelham Edgar, R. K. Gordon, J. M. Lothian, S. Morgan-Powell, V. B. Rhodenizer, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, G. G. Sedgewick, F. W. Tamblyn.

BUSINESS EXECUTIVE: J. Markowitz (*Business Manager*), Nathaniel Benson (*Managing Editor*), E. A. Hardy.

FAMOUS POEMS OF THE FIRST GREAT WAR

NATHANIEL A. BENSON, M.A.

IT hardly seems a long quarter-century ago since the English-speaking world was stirred and awakened by the ringing note that sounded in these lines:

> Now God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,
> And caught our youth and wakened us from sleeping
> With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power
> To turn as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
> Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary. . . .

This was the beginning of Rupert Brooke's great sonnet-sequence "1914." There were only six poems in it, but not since the great Victorians died have scarcely a hundred lines of poetry more unmistakably borne the seal of greatness. The passage of twenty-five years with their attendant stresses and varying trends of expression has in no way dimmed the lustre of Brooke's lines. They ring out again with the familiar golden note of crusade and courage, more loudly now, in these days when England and her Empire face a more rapacious ring of foes than they did in 1914. Many of England's former allies have altered inconceivably in these twenty-five years.

Given over to ruthless "isms" and brutally ferocious doctrines that recognize only the laws of fire and sword, a group of England's former comrade-nations have relinquished the glimpse of that gleam which they caught in the dark days of 1914-18—the deathless glory of living as free men and of fighting as free men that the code of the knout and gun might be shattered. A group of nations in arms caught and held that gleam of freedom high above the heads of a ravening, baying horde twenty-five years ago. But time has dealt harshly and strangely with many of freedom's former defenders—those nations have become scarcely recognizable today—they now subscribe to codes that are the exact opposite of what so many of their earlier generations died to protect and preserve.

But one may still thank God that—despite the bungling of some misguided statesmen, the willing blindness of many others, the darkly inscrutable policy of allowing certain allied evils to swell into monstrous growth—the soul of England and her Dominions has remained unchanged. The soldiers of England in 1939 are still impelled onward by the ideal so magnificently expressed by Rupert Brooke in 1914:

> If I should die, think only this of me
> That there's some corner of a foreign field
> That is forever England. There shall be
> In that rich earth a richer dust concealed,
> A dust that England bore, shaped, made aware
> Gave once her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
> A body of England's, breathing English air
> Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home. . . .

And those men of the "Lost Generation" in 1915, who so nobly yet dispassionately viewed the prospect of dying for their ideals, brought intangible qualities of greatness to their contemporaries. What these ennobling forces were, no poet has stated as clearly or compellingly as Brooke did in another passage of that great sonnet-sequence:

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us for our dearth
Holiness lacked so long, and love and pain.
Honour has come back as a king to earth
And paid his subjects with a royal wage
And Nobleness walks in our ways again
And we have come into our heritage.

Perhaps Brooke's finest lines were those in which he symbolized the meaning of such a heritage and its defenders-unto-death:

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

It is small wonder that Winston Churchill, who is destined to play an even more important part in the present Titanic struggle than he did in the last, wrote of Brooke after the latter died at twenty-eight aboard a hospital-ship in the Aegean:

A voice had become audible, a note had been struck more true, more thrilling, more able to do justice to the nobility of our youth in arms engaged in this present war, than any other—a voice more able to express their thoughts of self-surrender, and with a power to carry comfort to those who watched them so intently from afar. The voice has been swiftly stilled. Only the echoes and the memory remain; but they will linger. . . . Brooke was all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be in days when no sacrifice but the most precious is acceptable, and the most precious is that which is most freely proffered.

Now, in these later times of bewildering stress, the unforgettable echo of many a great poem comes back into one's memory. No more romantic idealistic figure died in the Great War than the American poet Alan Seeger (1888-1916), a tall, handsome, self-dedicated poet, a man of means, a splendid type of intellectual "unisolated" kind of American who believed that humanity's cause was his own, even to the extent of enlisting in the French Army at the beginning of the War in August, 1914, in the "Deuxième Régiment Etranger,

Bataillon C, première Compagnie, troisième Section." For a year and a half Alan Seeger fought beside his French comrades-in-arms in those bitter early battles of 1914-15. At first he regarded it all as a glorious adventure, a sort of crusade, but gradually the truth of the War's deep and full grimness came over him, and he wrote those tremendous lines which still ring out as a soldier's virile farewell:

> I have a rendezvous with Death
> At some disputed barricade
> When Spring comes back with rustling shade
> And apple-blossoms fill the air—
> I have a rendezvous with Death
> When Spring brings back blue days and fair.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> God knows 'twere better to be deep
> Pillowed in silk and scented down,
> Where love throbs out in blissful sleep
> Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
> Where hushed awakenings are dear. . . .
> But I've a rendezvous with Death
> At midnight in some flaming town
> When Spring trips north again this year,
> And I to my pledged word am true,
> I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger kept his envisioned rendezvous on the battlefield of Belloy-en-Santerre where he fell in the first wave of a major French attack on July 4, 1916. For himself and all who fell with him he had shortly before written a noble epitaph in the splendid lines of his little-known "Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France":

> . . . Dry, furthest foam upon disastrous shores
> Leaves that made last year beautiful, still strewn
> Even as they fell, unchanged, beneath the changing moon;
> And earth in her divine indifference
> Rolls on, and many paltry things and mean
> Prate to be heard and caper to be seen.
> But they are silent, calm; their eloquence
> Is that incomparable attitude;

No human presences their witness are,
But summer clouds and sunset crimson-hued,
And showers and night-winds and the northern star,
Nay, even our salutations seem profane,
Opposed to their Elysian quietude;
Our salutations calling from afar,
From our ignobler plane
And undistinction of our lesser parts:
Hail, brothers, and farewell; you are twice blest, brave hearts.
Double your glory is who perished thus,
For you have died for France and vindicated us.

Many a bright name was suddenly struck from the rolls of immortality, for so many splendid young lives were ended when they had barely had time to enter their names in the lists of literature—Charles Hamilton Sorley, Julian Grenfell, Edward Thomas, Joyce Kilmer, Cameron Wilson, Francis Ledwidge, Thomas McDonagh, and Joseph Plunkett. Laurence Binyon spoke their requiem perfectly in his great elegiac lines "For the Fallen":

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them. . . .

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in our time of darkness
To the end, to the end, they remain.

One of the most memorable of the War's moving elegies was written by a woman, Winnifred M. Letts:

I saw the spires of Oxford
As I was passing by
The gray spires of Oxford
Against a pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
Who went abroad to die.

and the four exquisite verses move to a perfect closing stanza:

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA
N. S.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,
Who laid your good lives down,
Who took the khaki and the gun
Instead of cap and gown.
God bring you to a fairer place
Than even Oxford town.

To quote Masefield's "August, 1914" in part would be to mar it, but there is another war poem of his, infinitely moving if much less well-known, his farewell tribute to his friend Rupert Brooke. Masefield had sailed closely past the Island of Skyros in the Aegean shortly after Brooke was buried there in April, 1915. Thus the Poet Laureate described his friend's resting-place, "The Island of Skyros":

I saw her like a shadow on the sky
In the last light, a blur upon the sea,
Then the gale's darkness put the shadow by,
But from one grave that island talked to me;
And in the midnight, in the breaking storm,
I saw its blackness and a blinking light,
And thought: "So Death obscures your gentle form,
So memory strives to make the darkness bright;
And in that heap of rocks your body lies,
Part of the island till the planet ends,
My gentle comrade, beautiful and wise,
Part of this crag this bitter surge offends,
While I who pass, a little obscure thing,
War with this force, and breathe, and am its king."

Canadian literature, ever the stepchild of British and American critics, contributed a small but distinguished body of verse to the poetry of the Great War. Our better-known poets, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, Duncan Campbell Scott, Canon F. G. Scott, made notable contributions. Marjorie L. C. Pickthall who died only a few years after the Armistice (in 1922) created a superb poem in "When It Is Finished," with its solemn intercessional closing:

We leave them to Thee, Saviour. We've no price,
No utmost treasure of the seas or lands,
No words, no deeds, to pay their sacrifice

Only while England stands,
Their pearl, their pride, their altar,—not their grave,—
Bid us remember in what hours they gave
All that mankind may give
That we might live.

And there was the late Lieutenant Bernard Freeman Trotter's "Poplars":

O, a lush green English meadow—it's there that I would lie—
A skylark singing overhead, scarce present to the eye,
And a row of wind-blown poplars against an English sky. . . .

In his single fine volume of poems *The Leather Bottle*, Theodore Goodridge Roberts caught a splendid moment in his "Cook House at Reveille (December 1914)":

Outside, the mud between the huts;
The dismal murk of mist and night;
The chill; the sullen waking. Here
The warmth and stir and crimson light. . . .
And here is one who worked, last year,
With Mitchell's crew, on Beaver Lake
Where the dark spruces lift their spires;
Where axes flash and white frosts ache;
And snows are dry as desert sands
And only the moose-bird stirs a wing
Till April. . . . Here, in mist and murk,
Puzzled and sad, he serves his king.

Perhaps the best-known and most treasured of all Canada's poems of the Great War was written on the battlefield by a Canadian doctor. With his friend and brother-officer Miller Cosgrove, John McCrae sat on the edge of a dugout near the front lines one day in the spring of 1915. Together they watched the larks flying and the poppies blooming above the graves in a little cemetery of all nations, where lay Belgian, French, British, and Moroccan soldiers. Their thoughts were heavy as they remembered a warm comrade of theirs, Lieutenant Alex. Helmer who had been buried there only a few days before, within sound of the sullen thunder of the guns.

McCrae remarked on the song of the larks, the fresh wind, the flaming poppies, and the fact that this was just the sort of spring day that their late comrade loved. A little later Cosgrove found McCrae scribbling on a used envelope as he sat in the back of an ambulance. Inquiry elicited the fact that he had just written a poem—which he read on Cosgrove's insistence. Later the poem appeared in *Punch* and the world came to know it:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
  That mark our place; and in the sky
  The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
  Loved and were loved, and now we lie
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
    In Flanders fields.

SISTER MARAH

(14TH CENTURY)

Cold is the breath of the night,
Coldly the starlight falls
In piercing arrows of light
Over the cloister walls.

O Mary, Mother of God,
How slowly the hours go by
Here where I kneel on the glistening sod
Under an empty sky.

Day by day I have prayed
To the saints in their ivory towers,
Night by night till the dawning grayed
The fringe of the morning hours,
I have knelt in the chill and the rain
Pleading with sobbing breath
Asking a boon that I asked in vain
The cool, white kiss of death.

But the fair saints heeded me not,
High in their ivory towers,
And the bleeding wings of my soul are caught
In the net of the lengthening hours!

So I make my prayer to you
O Mary, Mother of God,
You were a woman too,
You knew the scourge of the rod,
You drained the chalice of rue,
You followed the thorn-dark way,
The sword-sharp stones you trod
And you looked on the broken Clay,
O Mary, Mother of God!

I kneel in the dusk and grope
For a dream that is not there,
My days are barren of hope
My nights are chains of prayer.

The wind blows over the hill,
Over the frost-rimed sod,
Dark and chill as my heart is chill
O Mary, Mother of God!

. . . .

Summer was on the wold,
And his falchion flashed in the sun
As he rode through the morning gold
Dreaming of battles won.

He rode with a dream, and I
Wept as he passed from sight
For the brave are swift to die,
And his sword was first in the fight.

Day by day through the flame
Of the gossamer-golden air
I heard him breathe my name
In a voice half sigh, half prayer.

When night lay dark on the sod,
In the silver hour of death
I heard him call upon God
In a strange unsteady breath.

I saw from my casement wide
The daisies die in the grass
And I saw in a winged tide
The fluttering swallows pass.

The wind came in from the sea
Sharp as a thrusting lance,
And the withered leaves whirled free
In a wild, death-driven dance.

The gray storms beat at my door,
Beat at the keep and the clod,
Yet he rode from the south no more
O Mary, Mother of God!

I have kept no count of the years,
The suns and the moons are the same,
Close-veiled in an aura of tears
And pale as a dying flame.

I have kept no count of the days,
No count of the bitter hours,
I care no more for the hawthorn sprays,
Nor the frost's frail-petalled flowers.

I have kept no count of the days,
O Mother of God, be kind,
If my feet must follow these barren ways
Then let my soul be blind!

. . . .

My pallid sisters dwell
In a world apart from pain,
Matin and vesper bell,
Shadow and sun and rain
And aves rising like birds
Into the crystal air,
Lovely, tremulous words
Woven in cloth of prayer;
These are their life and their breath,
These are the dreams they live.

Here in this cloistered death;
O Mother of God, forgive
This heart that shall never learn
The still, white peace they know
Whose echoless footsteps spurn
All but the paths of sleep;
Under their wimples' snow
They have hidden the harvest of years,
In a silence soft and deep,
But I hold mine here in my hand
Bitter with blight of tears,
Breed of a barren land,
In a moon of grieving sown,
Mocking the golden grain
That lies on the altar stone,
Mocking the burgeoning sod,
Chaff of sorrow and husks of pain,
O Mary, Mother of God!

The bells in the steeple swing
Slowly as harps in the wind,
And their distant echoes ring
Far-off, and sorrow-thinned,
And faint with a dream of musk;
The silent ringdoves wheel
Above the cotes in the dusk,
And my pale-lipped sisters kneel
In an ecstasy of prayer,
And the murmured aves rise
Like a flutter of wings on the air
Under the vesper skies.

I kneel in the chill and the dew,
O Mother of all mankind,
Lean from your throne in the blue

Where the golden tapers blind
The eyes of the newly-arisen,
O Mother of God, be kind,
Shatter the bars of my prison,
Loosen the thongs that bind,
O Mary of Sorrows Seven,
O Mary of Inn and Tree,
Lean from your sheltering Heaven
And set my spirit free!

. . . .

There is peace on the hill tonight,
And calm in the far, cool sky,
Yet never a gleam of light
Answers my heart's bleak cry,
For the rood is cold to my lips,
Colder than clay or stone,
And coldly under my fingertips,
The beads move one by one.

One by one in the dark,
In the dark, yet a strange light glows,
I hear the voice of the lark,
And the sky is aflame with rose,
Caught from earth's highest altar,
The cloister walls grow dim,
The aves tremble and falter
Drowned in a swelling hymn,
Like a linnet the last note lingers,
Afloat on the crest of the flood,
The beads grow warm to my fingers,
And warm to my lips the rood,
Shrived from the stains of my prison
I look on the reborn sod,
With the eyes of the newly-arisen,
O Mary, Mother of God!

F. Robina Monkman

IDEAL DECLINE

Sleep now: there will be no more growth of trees;
No buds will break to revel in the breeze
Which raises day by day a keener blade
Against the lagging sun and lengthening shade.
Sleep now: become an autumn sacrifice
To pagan gods and set a strange device
Above familiar heaps of gaudy seed
Banked round with golden grass and grapes that bleed
In quietude their sweet, sustaining juice
To blend with ours—but now to sterner use.
The air is still: no whispering, no cries
Of far, belated bugles, nor the sighs
Of dead, unhappy votaries would break
The sleep we crave. The gods will never wake
To chide or cheer, distinguish salt from sweet,
If we should lie beneath a winding sheet
Of harvest fruits and flowers all alone.
Sleep now, upon this broken altar-stone
Where long neglect and old decay allow,
O loving heart, O lonely heart, sleep now.

Norman Hainsworth

THE LAST HOUR

The fragile beauty of each autumn day
Is doubly precious now,
And every moment a new miracle
Snatched in agonizing ecstasy
From time's reluctant grasp.

Sister, sister, watch the road
And tell me what you see. . . .
I see a cloud of dust
And helmets gleaming in the sun.

Sister, sister listen well
And tell me what you hear. . . .
Menacing thunder of hooves
Louder and nearer, and yet more near.

Sister, sister, at your loom
What are you weaving now? . . .
I'm weaving shrouds, my child,
Shrouds for the young, the strong and the fair.

Lightly, lightly hold this brittle golden day,
This frail last hour of grace,
Enshrine it in the heart, a talisman
Against the coming winter of our world,
So certain, cruel, near.

Mary Elizabeth Colman

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA
N. S

TO AN UNATTAINABLE LOVER

O let us wreathe our love in laughter while
there is a florist at the corner store,
for love will surely laugh at us before
the end, and broken hearts are out of style.
I'll go buy purple hollyhocks and smile
when they remind me of you to the core.
I'll take them down upon the bit of shore
where you and I once talked about their guile.

And coming back . . . the road will lead us past
the elm that is an ebon silhouette
against the satin of the sky above;
but I shall not remember nor forget. . . .
I'll run until my breath is short and fast
and still snatch time to laugh because we love.

NOVEMBER

I meant to watch the autumn come and go
with you beside me;
meant to let my hand
rest in your hand
and lazily watch the leaves fall
as though it were a play.
I thought of it in the summer
with a slow smile of pity
for withered things.

But autumn came and is gone
like a long sigh of pain.
Leaves lie melancholy and rusted
under careless feet
or whirl in crackling fragments
in a chilling wind.

Autumn passed before I realized;
and one day when I stepped upon
a scarlet leaf,
I fancied
it was my own heart.

Estelle Fox

A CANADIAN TO AMERICA!

Lincoln is walking his hill again
Silent and sore-distressed
Walking his lonely hill to weep
For the slave and the sore-oppressed.
Freedom, trembling and trampled now
Has broken on Lincoln's rest.

Washington stands with folded arms
And a sneer on his handsome face—
"Was it for this we shouldered arms
To fashion a frightened race?
Or a nation to shoulder tyrants' harms
To a proper lowly place?"

"Thank God!" said a patriot, "we are all safe;
The Pacific is deep and wide."
Yet those squadrons that never ride the deep
But across the heavens stride
May load their devils' eggs by night
For a brief Hawaiian ride.

Never before in the time of man
Never since time arose,
Such a dangerous, desperate devil's clan
Of tyrants together arose;
Laugh at the portent if you can!
Laugh as their fury grows?

Only the oceans, only your strength,
Only your thews and brain
Keep you from feeling the heels on your throat
As Austria, Poland, and Spain;
These, and the power of England and France,
Spare you the martyr's stain.

Hitler has mocked your ideals so long
And spat in democracy's face,
Shrilling his lusty tyrant-song
With another in Caesar's place.
When their eagle legions take the sky,
Blood will besmear your face!

Russia's ideals were never yours,
Italy none may trust,
France is surrounded by ruthless foes,—
And face them at last you must!
Or wait while each tiger power grows
In insult and greed and lust.

Think of the children in sleepy towns
Along the Hudson's shores
Blown into shreds like the Warsaw babes
By the murderous swarm that roars
From Barcelona to Cracow now
Where children are slain in scores.

Arise, America! Awake!
The flaming hour is near!
When liberty *shall* perish from the earth
On many a tyrant spear.
Arise America! and strike!
And sound your trumpets clear!

Nathaniel A. Benson

EYES OF THE WORLD

The Eskimo
Having upturned almond slits
Questions why
The Indian eye
Should run the wrong way
On his face
Like a dog's?

The high Hindu Prince
Has the eyes of a gazelle:
The great fighting Sikhs
Have the eyes of a tiger:
The French have the quick
Darting glance of a bird.

The cold fishy stare
Of the English must be due
To the cold clammy fogs
And sea air
Shrugs the Spaniard.

Each, in his turn, states
Mine eyes
And mine alone
Are Human.

"STILL LIFE"

Wise Buddha admonished the great God of Laughter.—
"Ponder on griefs and the woes of the world:
Why must you laugh there before noon and after
While blood-shed and slaughter and floods are unfurled?"

Chang Ming the long-bearded, sage-like and hoary
Holding the stave and red heart in his hand,
Wonders why queer fate must cut short a life-time
When dignified age can be noble and grand.

My lover, a bird-man, was shot down last evening
A black spinning flotsam through bright rays of sun:
Great Buddha, the thinker, admonished the optimist,—
But Fut keeps on laughing each day 'till it's done.

Chang Ming, the old Sage, regrets youthful slaughter
But softly says: "Hush,—his Glory will keep."
The Still Life, inanimate, continues its playlet
While I choke with sorrow, and yet cannot weep.

E. Hope Kerr

ORCHARD FANTASIA

Do not reproach me
Because I am enamoured of the names of apples.
Let it be granted that the Hesperian blue
Showed such a russet frieze,
Modelling of fruits as golden;
Coveted, fragrant symbols
Waxily enorbed in windless autumn,
Chrysolite and polished garnet,
Apples in the gardens of the dancing maidens.
Underneath sprawled the dragon,
Green-gilt,
Its armour segmented:
But you cannot persuade me that the apples bore
These provocative names.

Who among the maidens knew the Fameuse?
Crisp and delicate as snow
Crunching beneath one's feet;
The skin vivid—
Like the spilt blood of a robin redbreast.

Rome Beauty:
Another name to conjure with.
Can you not see the ancient battered wain
Staggering beneath its load of purple grapes
On the way to the city;
And the laughing, urgent contadine,
And the irresolute donkey?
There is a girl far more arrogant than the others.
Her crimson-striped kerchief
Reveals her swelling bosom.
Superb hoops dangle in her ears,
Massive, burnished—
Hoops for a lion to jump through.

Black Twig,
Wealthy,
Scarlet Pippin:
You have each been admirably named.
You are of curtseying pink and white orchards,
You are of country fairs companioned by stout green cabbages,

You are of the valleys and the hillsides
And the mellow September.
You are of long winter nights, and the rosy stove,
And chestnuts popping:
And of toes tapping to the cornstalk fiddle.

Wolf River intrigues me:
I am held by a frozen stream,
A glittering defiance to the moon;
Blue-spruce woods
Curving into northern loneliness;
And a lost trapper.

I feel that Paragon and Salome are opposed:
Chastity and Voluptuousness:
One could scarcely call them rivals.
Blenheim Orange suggests old-world diplomacy.

Jonathan:
The lad who leans upon the gate
After the milking is done,
Watching the stars come out
And the lights of town
Twinkling in the distance.
Is he remembering
The rich, teasing perfume of the wild crab-apple blossom?

When I renovate my castle in Spain
The borders shall be painted apples,

Clear yellow with a wine blush;
And like a child
Whose playroom is festooned with the charms of fairy lore
I shall weave romantic tales of the Duchess,
(Slightly acidulous),
And of King David and the bold Mc'Intosh,
And of the amazing adventures that befell them
In their search for the Winter Banana.

Verily I am enamoured of the names of apples.

Ethel Kirk Grayson

BETRAYAL

A thieving wind came out last night
And whispered to the maple trees
Such songs that they forgot the summer,
Let slip all their golden gowns
Upon his soft persuading fingers,
Till he, fat with their treasure,
Stole off down the street, content.

This morning all the frosty lanes
Are drifted down with dying leaves.
Every naked maple tree
Is shivering in the autumn cold
And crying to its faithless lover:—
But the wind goes by them silently,
And kicks their sodden rags
Beneath his feet.

Fred E. Laight

GRAIN ELEVATORS

Like strange cathedrals
To a stranger god,
All bleakly grey
Against the evening sky,
The concrete towers stand.
Their walls are windowless,
As if the soul within
Were blind to all
The prairie world
Without, the while
Their cold walls reach
Toward the distant sky.

Then, one by one,
Around their base,
The little lamps of town
Flicker, like altar candles
Lighted silently
By votaries
Of the golden god,
The idol—WHEAT.

Elizabeth Garbutt

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA
HALIFAX, N. S.

CONVALESCENT

And now the unreluctant dawn descends
Across the major night wherein I've lain,
No more my will determinedly defends
My lips against their utterance of pain;
I need not lie in agony apart,
Held captive by discordancy of days,
But wisdomed by the findings of my heart,
I lift my voice in newer notes of praise.

How sweet this anchored weariness which drips
Upon the tired planet of my mind,
Almost I touch it with the finger-tips
Which yesterday no ecstasy divined.
From bitterness of body this release
Is like the graver miracle of peace.

POSSESSION

In the vault of my soul
Lies the wealth of a world,
The riches of earth and sky,
The thundering seas with waters hurled,
Where winds of eternity die.

Oh, mine is the grandeur
Of a shadow-long night,
And stars that are dipped in flame,
Dissolving in silence when the light
Brings beauty without a name.

Eternal the conflict,
And eternal the peace
Of the soul and of the sod;
Man's spirit can only find release
In the upward love of God.

Clara Bernhardt

PRAYER

Beauty be merciful,
Deliver me from the pain
Of my unsung songs;
Silence is deep as the sea
And high as the sky
But it burns me like a fire.

Beauty be merciful,
My soul is burdened
With unspoken words,
That dark dumbness that blinds
And stifles soaring thought,
The agony of silence.

Beauty be merciful,
Let me sing only one song—
Spring came, sailing the south wind,
The moon shone from a dark sky
Of fathomless blue. Before
The altar of the unknown

I stood silent; suddenly
You gave a meaning
To the stars.

L. H. C.

AUTUMN, THE DISSEMBLER

I'll don my brightest frock and gayest slippers,
And let the dream shine wistful in my eyes,
And who will know that death is grimly waiting
Beyond the morrow's dawn when sun shall rise!

I'll twist a golden vine around my tresses,
My corsage shall be aster's purple flower,
My gems are rubies set in dusky silver,
I'll wear a smoky scarf in chilly hour.

I'll laugh and dance and tease you, puzzled planet,
I'll lay my glowing cheek against your breast,
I'll kiss your eyes asleep in mellow twilight,
And watch an hour beside your troubled rest.

And in your dreams, old earth, you'll stir and wonder
How you can keep such sweetness, and at dawn
Your empty hands will hold a wisp of scarlet,
And Autumn, the dissembler, will be gone.

Lillian Collier Gray

A SEQUENCE

(1) Macabre Patriotique

Eh Well!
Each soldier slain
Will fertilize the grain
That grows to nourish once again
Soldiers!

(2) Japanese Girl Barber

Do you find patience for the all-day job
By pretending
That the hairy cheeks of some rough customer
Are the smooth lines
Of a lover?

(3) Song before Suicide

Hate of myself and of others
Has eaten a hole in my heart.
The world is a dust and it smothers
And I would depart.

They will name me a coward, who see me
So quiet and settled at length;
But within them will envy be nourished
And their censure will utter its strength.

They will bury me, shaking their fool heads,
Saying, "He will not rest easy there."
They'll forget me and crawl back to living;
But I shall not care!

(4) POET'S JUSTIFICATION OF EXISTENCE

Nothing
Is quite worthy
To be loved at first;
Reality needs some make-up . . .
My task!

(5) LINES

We've lost our importance;
What our fathers suspected
We know—
That the universe is emptiness unending
And we but lonely, conscious accidents,
Bumped into being
By the awful, indifferent humour
Of the nature of things.

(6) SCHOLAR'S REGRET

I have become sterile against the sunlight of life,
For the strength of love that might have upsurged within me
Has gone into the remembering of antique words, the telling of
dead years' doings.
Here am I now—a ghost on the sidelines. . . .

Paul Halley

TO A DEAD POET

Breathe now, live now:
The stampede of yesterday
Crushed what words could not say:
Flesh winced in the playing;
Heart shuddered; spilled.
Live now, sing now:
The sincere moving of you in life's patterns goes on,
You are in the orbit of material eternity;
Canonized, your body melts with beloved dust.
Sing now, be now:
Learn simple truth, touching bottom.
Mingle with the earth:
You knew its worth.

FURROWS

The furrows drink rain,
And I am alone, watching this beautiful process.
There is more than just the contact here,
This is eager, this is lovers' meeting, this is fusion:
Overhead the birds winging, whistle, rain-eager—
Below, a million grains temper their lot with water
And the air swirls excited, trees whimper;
Soft, wet on my arm, caresses, soft, wet, loving;
The furrows drink, drink.

Sidney Fuller

SONNET

This life, this gift unsought, so strangely mine,
Vouchsafes no answer, question as I may
This fusion of the human and divine,
That makes articulate the insensate clay.
Sometimes I've wondered if perhaps 'twere best
Not to have lived, and craved an empty board,
Devoid of viands, without Host or guest,
The lamp unlighted and the wine unpoured.
But the mood passed. I, who have walked alone
With hate and fear, and quelled them in my hour,
With level, steadfast gaze, now claim my own—
Mine is the glory, ay, and mine the power!
Serenity and strength to me belong,
Their alchemy transmuting pain to song.

Anna M. Henderson

AUTUMN WALK

Golden-rod,
You come not too soon
For one who seeks the discipline
Of your bright wand.
Treading this autumn sod
A healing may be found,
And the dark stain erased
Left by those fevered thoughts
Of loss and gain.

The milk-weed,
Loosing her gleaming freight
For those argent journeys
Through blue and shining space,
Shows a dim and grey submission
To the changes in her fate.

Ah, do not harass me with words
As to this walk
Which I have taken.
Know only this—
That with the fading leaves
My griefs have been forsaken.

Ruth Johnston

AS ONWARD SWEEPS THE TIDE . . .

We thought we had the river within bounds. . . .
Then one dark isle first crumbled and was gone,—
And we stood by, doubtfully looking on
From this west point, on safer, higher grounds.

Again, in sudden swell, the growing flood
With mighty gesture, pulled a fortress down!
—We gasped as we beheld the people drown—
And the dammed race a moment sated stood.

Once more we looked: O surging on its way,
We hear the river-wrack's approaching roar!
Shall we unite, withstand it? No, our shore
Still, still is safe; 'twill carve the eastern clay.

Now onward sweeps the tide, and overnight
Submerges town and country out of sight!

Christine L. Henderson

IN OUR TOWN

These first evenings of atumn
Are suddenly dark with a whispering wind-disturbed darkness.
Our footsteps sound very loud on the wooden sidewalks;
We pause involuntarily under the street-lamps
Then quicken our steps through the creaking tree-roofed tunnels
Where our hurrying shadows pass us, lengthen before us,
Merge in the trees before we can reach the next lamp-gleam.

We do not grow used to these first black evenings, that find us
Every autumn a little more apprehensive,
A little more hurried; reluctant to walk in the shadows.

Floris Clark McLaren

THE S.O.S.

I cannot pen a line to-day,
  Lyric nor sonnet,
Epic, nor ode, nor roundelay.
  My thinking bonnet
Has lost its precious skylark feather.
Alackaday! This windy weather!

I sent the birds an S.O.S.:—
  A new plume lend me!
How can I sing love-lays unless
  My friends befriend me?—
But though they lunch on bread and suet
At my expense, they will not do it!

A bluejay on the window-sill
  This very morning
Flirted at me his handsome quill,

PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF NOVA SCOTIA
HALIFAX, N. S.

My bluster scorning.
Two chickadees with air beguiling
Tittered. I'd swear I saw them smiling.

The sparrows line up on the fence
And call for dinner.
What utter nerve! What impudence!
But not a sinner
Among the lot my food shall gobble
While they for me will take no trouble!

I cannot pen a single line
In plumeless bonnet!
But—Ha! Is this a page of mine
With lines upon it?
Those birds! They've fooled me with their chaffing:
Twit-twit! Just listen to them laughing!

THE EXPLORER

Sighing, I closed the book and laid it by;
Yet still the glamour of that Alpine quest
For glorious, nameless flowers so near the sky,
Thrilled me with ecstasy that stole my rest.

O, to obey the wanderlust that calls,
Has called since childhood my home-havened feet!
To cross the seas and scale the mountain walls,
Seeking and finding treasures strange and sweet!

One morn a Messenger shall come to me
Across the blue immensities of night,
Bringing me passport. Shall I then be free
To wander, spirit-winged, from height to height?

Let me explore, unchecked by mortal bars,
This wonder-world. . . . Then, Azrael, the Stars!

Lilian Leveridge

STREET

The heavy yellow spider
Sags in her delicate octagon
Of glutinous cables, silver-spoked.

Rain
Sprinkles and fogs the city at night . . .
Wet leaves underfoot
Cling low out of the wind . . .
The trees are wet . . .
And a street-lamp, like a great yellow spider
Spins about in the shining twigs.

My eyes are flies
Struggling in the bright meshes of the tangled web.

Alan Brown

NAPOLI

Like an old, once lovely courtesan,
Passé in faded silk
Greyed by the crumbling dust of lava-land,
The ancient seaport stands—
A fatalist flamboyantly arrayed,
Agleam with jewels:
Beryl bracelets clasped with lapis lazuli,
Her waist entwined with crystal, aqua green,
Pale pearl and amethyst,
And turquoise to conceal her ruined throat.
Her wise old eyes like pools of mystery
Stare out at Naples Bay,
Past fishing boats and singing troubadors
And ships of battle grey
To where the Mediterranean meets the blue—
Her shoulders haughty towards Vesuvius.

Amabel King

SOMETIME

Sometime at close of day
I shall arise
With tired eyes
And lose my way.

I shall descend alone
Into the wood
Misunderstood,
But without moan.

There in the night apart
Peace at long last
Will fill this vast
Abyss, my heart.

Stanley Beirnes

MONOLOGUE AT 2 A.M.

My tithes of yellow gold are turned to dross
By the high god above my candle-beam;
I come to blacken out the taper's gleam
And lay the altar with a shrouded cross.
My groping fingers mar the lily-gloss
Of reredos fashioned out of spirit dream.
No matter. Soon each silver-broidered seam
Shall seal and panel up my hoarded loss.

My fingers reach the white, imperious flame.
Brave light, that I have cherished through the years,
I hold you in my palm. In death, no blame! . . .
Bright lance, now sear this flesh, nor heed my tears,
Find the firm bone, engrave thereon his name,
Then, unavailing, hell may chant its fears.

Kathryn Munro

SEPTEMBER THIRD

Last night the peaceful heavens rang with prayers
That brightened all the stars and fired the moon.
A billion hearts beat with a single beat;
A billion hopes were one.

Tonight the droning skies are thick with planes
Passing like flocks of geese across the moon.
Men ride with Death, where hope and stars have fled,
Shatt'ring our prayers with Bombs!

Anson Bailey Cutts

SYMBOLS

The molten stars that pour into the sky
Are spurting flames from all the fires that die;

An epic symbol is that starry spray
Always of beauty that is far away,

And yet to earth none lovelier comes so near
As stars and shadows in that silver sphere,

Stars are the signs of dreaming earth; in them
Is light like pearls upon a garment's hem.

Sheila Barbour

DETOUR

O Humanity,
What have you done to the world
With your ingrained desire
Of self, ever self, forever.

Who would ever guess
That we were born to laugh
And listen to the sun
Calling the buttercups to come
And wave their heads above the grass.

Paul Potts

LITTLE THINGS

Now I must be content with little things:
The spread of wings above my head,
The day's red fall.

No more the piercing mystery of love,
The clash of life on life,
The work through all.

A little backwash on an ocean's shore
Fills in my niche, too small
For all my dreams.

And I must be content with little things
I find; for I have striven
Too hard it seems.

Yet there may be a love in little things,
In leaves that shake in airs,
In watery gleams,

To make all striving seem a humble thing.
The dreamer in his dreaming
Less than leaf or wing.

Ann Wilson

Cross-Country. By ALAN CREIGHTON. Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1939, $2.00.

ALAN CREIGHTON has been before the Canadian reading public for some years through his appearances in magazines and anthologies and through *Earth Call*, his first published collection of verse. His work has been characterized by a fine restraint, freedom from sentimentality, and by a fidelity of description which applies equally well to landscapes and human faces.

Cross-Country does not just mark time. The qualities referred to are still there but further disciplined and, in addition, the "earth sense" is quickened to fresher and vital responses, while the human scene is more richly inhabited. The Hardyesque contrast between the permanence of nature and the transitoriness of human passion is pictured in several of the poems.

BLOMIDON SPEAKS

From hot Triassic days,
The pulse of boiling seas,
Heavily remote,
I have watched your coming
Across the ages.
Now I laugh at your orchards,
The bloom of your pale valleys.
Against the far knowledge of my blue slope
Your years and doings
Are as a scattering of wild roses
Or the tinkle of a cow-bell
On the summer wind.

The feeling of kinship with the earth is arrestingly shown in the title poem and "Spring Burning":

Beyond the twirling wood smoke
The fixed town lies with factories, railroads and steeples,

Wearying one with its static grip, its subterranean deadness,
Even the motor traffic is a robot monotony of conventional transfer.
But the bonfire flame close by, breaking way, bloody and rapid,
Bewilders me into an entranced acceptance of misty hills,
Making me husky and excited, affronted by houses,
Rebuffed by what keeps me from my own.
Again I am little and a dog is important;
After years, my obeisance to birds, trees and brooks,
As I feel in my hand a fluff of burnt grass.

The love poems—"Serenade," "Dance Partner," "Enchantress," "Stolen Bride," and others branch off from the traditional boggy path into a clear and sharper atmosphere. The Revolutionary poems are scarcely of the kind to warrant the title, deficient to some extent in the expectant fire, but, nevertheless, the etchings are done with pointed pencils.

MR. CLOTHES

I knew him well. He was a vest
A gleam of shirt, a round of collar,
Felt hat, suit coat, pants neatly pressed.
None cared if he were dunce or scholar.
He was of shoes with shining lace,
Fur overcoat with each November.
There may, perhaps, have been a face—
His clothes are all that I remember.

E. J. P.

Lyrics and Sonnets. By LILIAN LEVERIDGE. (Ryerson Poetry Chapbook.) Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1939, 75 cents.

Lyrics and Sonnets may be said to compose a rhapsody upon the Canadian flora and fauna. The book breathes of nature adoration. The forest is alive with full-throated frogs, kinglets and warblers, mourning-doves, hepaticas, crocuses, scillas, and trilliums.

The little volume is almost a compendium of natural phenomena set to rhythm and a genuine rapture in the sights and sounds described. The eternal spirit steals, in Wordsworthian fashion, through the valleys and hills, and holds communion with the bloodroot and the "tinted arbutus."

The flaws are largely those of convention, the acceptance of the routed mood and the facile phrase—"the lone dell, the purling stream, rivulets of gladness, the music-haunted dream, the moon-rapt lovers, petals rosy-rare," and so on. The virtues are those of a sincere nature-lover enjoying what the forests, streams, birds, and flowers offer to the demands of a sensitive soul. The sonnet "Tensed Strings" is a characteristic poem:

> Slender and young, and lovely as a flower
> In Alpine vale where glacial snows begin,
> She faced the audience. From her violin
> Wild melodies of love's awakening power,
> Laughter, and dreams, and light, in lyric shower
> She drew—clear, birdlike notes that well might win
> Envy from wind harp, silver-cadenced linn,
> Or fluting thrush in fragrant twilight hour.
>
> And one whose wistful eyes were dim with tears
> For ghosts of joys that died in vanished years
> Thus reasoned: Those clear notes of pure delight
> Were played on slender strings, constrained and tight.
> Perchance on human heart-strings, tensed to pain,
> The hand of Love may play as sweet a strain.

Excuse for Futility. By CHARLES FREDERICK BOYLE. (Ryerson Poetry Chapbook.) Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1939, 50 cents.

WHEN the history of the Canadian Literary Movement comes to be written, it will be noted with gratitude that Lorne Pierce, Editor of this series, made possible the publication of much good Canadian verse that otherwise might have been lost.

This volume, the second by the same author, is worthy to be included in the series. It closes with a memorable "Sonnet in War's Beginning":

> We loose monotony and we unwind
> The tentacles of undirected fear,
> And all our hopelessness we leave behind
> Most gladly, knowing right and truth are clear
> And will prevail to pattern us and bind
> Tomorrow's world to what we hold most dear.

J. M.

CLEMENT WOOD

the world famous author-critic, writes

"I hail

'THOUGH QUICK SOULS BLEED'

BY

GORDON LECLAIRE

for its power, courage, and singing beauty. Every poem conveys a wide background of culture."

» «

"A magnificent contribution to the great art of poetry."—Lucia Trent and Ralph Cheyney, Calif.

"The fire of his unquestioned sincerity, his sensitive humanitarianism burns white and clear. He has range, vigor, color, metrical ease and humanity."—Earle Birney in *The Canadian Forum.*

"Gordon LeClaire seems not to know any limit of creative genius or beauty of expression. So eloquently speaking the language of this confused age, so real, so human, that one feels if they were bruised they would bleed are these incisive poems."—*Leamington Post and News* (G. A. Leichliter).

"Triumphant in their energy and control of it, each and every poem is shot through with stark reality making an unusually arresting volume."—*Montreal Standard.*

"One of the outstanding poets of Canada and masters of the English language."—*Toronto Evening Telegram.*

"A genuine word-artist."—*Macon Telegraph,* Ga.

"A volume essential to every library that has a niche for poetry."—*Colorado Springs Gazette.*

"Electrifying in its singing beauty. Seldom does one meet with such a book as this, in which each poem is a peak in the lofty ranges of lyric grandeur."—*Poetry Caravan,* Fla.

"Rarely are poets found with so fine an interpretive power, so widely appealing a philosophy and such vital expression of ideas."—*Union-Bulletin,* Washington.

"His poems are sensuous, fiery, beautiful; they possess a rare philosophic depth, not the superficial glibness which is the best many poets are able to attain, but a virile, passionate quality which plumbs the depths of universal questions and arrives at striking conclusions."—*Durham Herald,* N.C.

"He makes his points with vigor, often with startling eloquence. His imagery has the sustaining glow of a good stained-glass window. Poems as fine as anything in contemporary American or Canadian verse."—*Montreal Herald.*

"His lyrical sword cuts through the sham of hypocrisy of man's inhumanity to man until the blood runs—a voice which is singing courageously and will be remembered."—*Poet Craft,* Conn.

" 'Though Quick Souls Bleed' brings Gordon LeClaire a fame that bids fair to become everlasting."—*Blackwell Journal,* Okla.

» «

SECOND LARGE PRINTING

» «

DeLuxe Copy - - $2 Postpaid

Order from—DR. LAWRENCE WILSON NEFF

EMORY UNIVERSITY ATLANTA, GA.